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subject that demands the first inspiration. Is it not so?"

"No," was the quick reply of the youth; and he continued, "I cannot get beyond a certain point, and so I must be estimated with the million instead of standing as a peer with the lofty few."

"Have no fear of that. You will never be confounded with the million; not if you take courage, and work for the desired end. My life upon it, with patience and industry, success and glory await you."

"Glory!—my friend, never! I have had my dreams of glory, and to you I owe my first inspirations. But let him crow who has won the fight," answered the young artist.

"Had I your youth and power, it would not be long before I would hear the world's applause."

"'Tis in vain. I should consume all my power before I could struggle through the darkness into the light I would walk in. All my patience would be gone, of which so much is required to excel in my profession."

For a moment both were silent. The old man shrugged his shoulders, as if he thought it useless to continue his argument; but our young artist, in a sort of half-sad voice, seemed not altogether disposed to drop the subject, and further remarked:

"And after all, what is it? What does it amount to? You have fought the long battle of life, and in your inspired moments created verses, romances, comedies, and the greatest satire ever penned by human genius; but did, or does, the world give back commensurate comforts and rewards for our devotion and the hours of our toil and trouble? Are old camlet cloaks the just or only reward for a life of industry and genius like yours?"

The sarcasm and truth of this remark disturbed not in the least the old man with all his experience, nor would he let the hardships and deprivations of his life be an argument to persuade others from the development of their talent. Hence his answer to the allusion of the camlet cloak was as full of philosophy as his heart of truth and interest for his young friend.

"Yes, Diego, 'tis true my old cloak is the best covering I have. I have, 'tis true, been neglected, persecuted, and now in my old days want many of the comforts of life. But let me tell you, my young friend, that all of life is not in the covering of our bodies, the quality of our diet, or the style of the castle we are sheltered under. No!" Here our old soldier threw back his camlet cloak, revealed his under-dress, and resting one hand upon his sword, continued with a more measured emphasis:

"I am poor; but, thank God, I am honest. Not only this, I have written not so much for others as for myself. There is an indescribable reward when we indulge the exercise of whatever genius God in his mercy may have graced us withal. It is an exquisite pleasure to see and know our own creations, whether in writing, painting, or the sciences. For myself, I have a world of my own, peopled with children born of my imagination. I talk with them, walk with them, eat with them, and whether good or bad in character, they serve a moral, and all alike give more joy to my old heart than could all other treasures of Spain. Still more, who can deprive me of them? They are part of my own being. They stay with me while I live, and will long survive my poor body!"

As he concluded this outburst of triumph, the old man looked like the perfect embodiment of human grandeur. The eagle look of the soldier, and the eloquence of the poet, quite subdued the young man, who now seemed at a loss for a reply. But our old companion, feeling he had broken the shackles of depression that had bound our young friend, took further advantage, and turning him around by the arm, said:

"Come, come, let us go to your studio, and there see what you are about."

The youth submitted, and followed, with his mind more calmed and peaceful with new resolves.

A few moments' walking brought them to the old house. Of course the apartment was found in the same disorderly condition as he last left it.

The old man, after tugging up the stairway, was quite exhausted, and sank back into the old arm-chair. Very few persons at his time of life could have been induced to undertake the task of climbing up such a stairway, unless urged by something of the most exciting importance. After a puff or two over his fatigue, he exclaimed:

"In heaven's name why don't you find an apart-

ment where you can have stairs to go up instead of such an infernal arrangement as you have here? It may all be well enough for young limbs like yours, that have the nimbleness of the antelope, but as for a man of sixty-eight, you might as well invite him to ascend the guillotine. However, where is the picture that has given you so much trouble and disappointment? Come, let me see it, and perhaps I can give you encouragement."

"There it is upon the floor." So saying, the artist took it up and placed it against the lower part of the easel.

The old man's attention was immediately arrested, and after looking at the picture for a few moments, he turned to the artist, and with a look of intense inquiry, said:

"Can it be possible that a man of your intelligence would treat so fine a production in so shameful a manner? Would you destroy or even abuse that which, perhaps, you cannot reproduce? It is the finest effort I have ever seen from your brush, and is worthy of an older artist than yourself. That bit of reflected light, running up the side of the neck and blending its cold, blue shadows with the warm blood tints, cannot be bettered; the real and the human pervades the whole picture."

"Reflected light! why there is the failure. O my friend, say not so, or I shall have cause to doubt your judgment." And so speaking, the artist turned and walked away.

"Sir, there is no excuse for your harsh conduct. The picture is fine in drawing, rich in color, and the expression of the face is admirable."

This extraordinary opinion of the old man was more than our artist could stand, and, as if he desired to hear no more said on the subject, he took the picture from its place and stood it, face in, to the wall, and then walked away to the window that overlooked the street, where, gazing upon the passing crowd below, he felt mortified at the old man's censure. However, he made no remark, for he knew his friend to be a man of superior judgment, and one well skilled in art criticism.

The old soldier felt at once the feelings and position of the artist. He also knew how easily youth are discouraged, and how much persuasion is sometimes required to hold them to their purpose. He felt, too, that now was the time to impress a lesson that would make a lasting mark upon his young mind, and save for the art world one who, perhaps, at some future day would stand an equal with the first masters of the age.

Our old friend followed him to the window, and throwing a glance over his shoulder into the street, beheld an old waterman with his cask upon his back vending water, as was the habit of the times. As soon as he saw the waterman's face, he grasped the artist by the arm, exclaiming:

"By heaven, there is a subject for you! Send for him! Out with your brushes and to work! Look at that silver beard and flowing hair in such rich clusters about his sunburnt face. Halloo, there!—I say, waterman! Halloo!" While thus shouting at the top of his voice, the boy who had sat the day before came running into the room. Our poet, soon as he entered, thrust some coppers into his hand, and dispatched the boy with directions immediately to bring him, the waterman, to the studio. This was soon accomplished, and so strong was the inducement for our artist to go to work, that, in a very few moments more, his crayon was dashing over the canvas in composition of a group of the waterman offering a drink to the beggar boy.

Soon the outline was finished, and the artist had commenced the coloring. During the progress of the work, the old soldier sat in the arm-chair behind the artist, looking over a manuscript which he had taken from the pocket of his camlet cloak, but would now and then throw a glance at the picture. Hour after hour passed away, until the cathedral clock struck the noonday time. So deep was the interest of the artist, that he observed and noticed nothing else but the work he was at. He counted neither minutes nor hours. He heard no striking of the clock; but, however little may be noticed the flight of time spent in intense application to a subject, nevertheless, the physical and mental organism keeps a faithful record and marks each second by a natural consumption of its own material. As exhaustion takes place, so the human system becomes debilitated and restless. Such was now the condition of the artist. He gave every indication of it by his frequent moving backward and forward, by the fre-

quent mixing of his tints, comparing them with the flesh of his subject, and then wiping them all from his palette as if nothing suited him; and as if it were impossible to accomplish what he desired. So he continued, minutely observed by his friend. At last he stepped toward his canvas with the intention of putting on a touch; but before he could do so, the old man stepped close behind him, and, quietly taking the artist by the arm, he prevented him with the remark:

"Stop! What would you do?"

"Do?" repeated the artist, his loud, clear voice reaching among the cobwebs and rotten rafters. "Do? What I cannot do—paint! Everything is distortion to me. There is no blood in my flesh; no transparency in my shadows; my efforts are fruitless!" With considerable passion, he then dashed his palette and brushes upon the paint table.

"Be quiet, young man, and listen to me. Your work is right. There is no fault in the picture: nor do you lack the talent to make it a great result. It is your eyes that are to blame by being overworked, and these make all this deception. Rest, my friend, your eyes require rest. Put your work aside for the day, and, to-morrow, you will see your picture as it is—admirable in color, composition and drawing." So saying, the old man resumed his seat.

The truth was too clear for our artist to doubt it. He could not fail to see the moral. The very pains that were at this moment shooting through his congested eyes fixed the seal of conviction upon his old friend's words, and quietly placing his mahl across the pegs in the easel, he turned to his friend and said:

"You have taught me a good lesson—a lesson that has perhaps not only saved me my eyes, but held me to a profession I love as dearly as my soul."

"Well, say no more. Come!" shouted the old man, jumping up from his chair. "Come! let us go without, and refresh ourselves with a quiet glass, and that social interchange of thoughts and feelings so necessary to the health and happiness of men. Wine, my boy; wine, I say!—and we will talk of men we love, and women, too—of poetry! of songs! and the drama!"

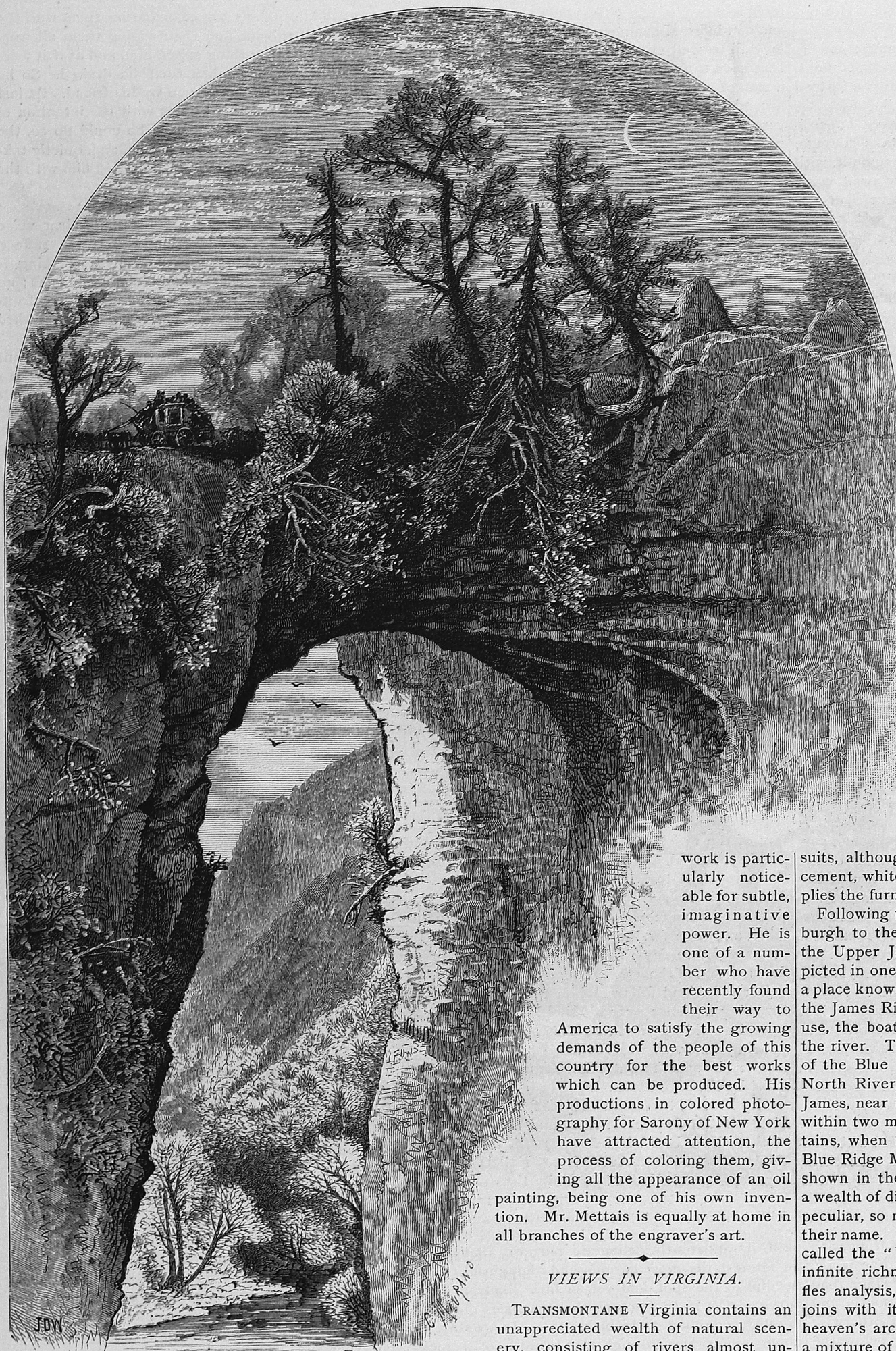
In a few minutes more these two noble spirits sat opposite to each other at a well-provided table. The wine was ruby red in their goblets. They talked of poetry and the drama with their souls ablaze on the subject. But alas! how little they dreamed when parting, that it was for the last time. Young Diego Velazquez, Spain's best painter of the period, at parting shook heartily the hand of the immortal Miguel Cervantes, the author of "Don Quixote," who in a few weeks, after this pleasant meeting with Velazquez, died, and his great soul winged its way to another world of eternal years, side by side with that other immortal spirit, Shakspeare, both dying on the same day, April 23, 1616. —Gabriel Harrison.

#### POLAND.

ARTISTS and poets never tire of depicting the sorrows of Poland, a country whose misfortunes make one of the darkest pages in history. Sometimes Poland is represented as a strong man thrown prone upon the ice, with an eagle plucking out his vitals; again the figure of Poland is a dimly outlined woman, seen hovering like a spirit over the flames of a nearly extinguished altar. Mr. Mettais, a celebrated French artist, who has within a couple of years made his home in America, has drawn for *THE ALDINE* his ideal of Poland. The admirably executed picture tells its own story—a woman cast down, shackled, deserted, but by no means hopeless. The story of Poland's dismemberment by Russia, while all Europe stood idly by, is well known to every reader of history. Even in the light of recent appalling events, we shudder as we think of the massacre in the suburbs of Warsaw, and on the bridge of Prague, the triumphant entry of Suwarrow into the Polish capital, and the insult given to human nature by the thanks offered up to heaven for victories obtained over men fighting in the sacred cause of liberty, by their oppressors! England and France refused to aid Poland in her struggle for liberty, although it was clearly shown, after the flight of the Grand Duke Constantine from Warsaw, that Russia had intended to march on Paris, and was only prevented from accomplishing that purpose by the Polish insurrection.

"Our strife is coming, but in Freedom's van  
The Polish eagle's fall is big with fate to man,"

sang Campbell, the English poet, long before the



NATURAL BRIDGE, VIRGINIA.—J. D. WOODWARD.

recent invasion of France, and the fall of Paris. Campbell has sung some noble verses in his "Lines to Poland." He says:

"In Fate's defiance—in the World's great eye,  
Poland has won her immortality.  
Wreathed, fettered, the victim falls renowned,  
And all her ashes will be holy ground."

"Great Poland's spirit is a deathless spark  
That's fanned by Heaven to mock the tyrant's rage:  
She, like the eagle, will renew her age,  
And fresh, historic plumes of Fame put on,—  
Another Athens after Marathon."

"Poland recasts—though rich in heroes old—  
Her men in more and more heroic mould:  
Her eagle ensign best among mankind  
Becomes, and types her eagle-strength of mind."

Mr. Mettais has been fortunate in his interpretation of the poet. As an artist, he ranks high, and his

work is particularly noticeable for subtle, imaginative power. He is one of a number who have recently found their way to America to satisfy the growing demands of the people of this country for the best work which can be produced. His productions in colored photography for Sarony of New York have attracted attention, the process of coloring them, giving all the appearance of an oil painting, being one of his own invention. Mr. Mettais is equally at home in all branches of the engraver's art.

#### VIEWS IN VIRGINIA.

TRANSMONTANE Virginia contains an unappreciated wealth of natural scenery, consisting of rivers almost unknown, mountains quite unexplored, and a large number of beauties and wonders which should attract the Amer-

ican tourist. The great mountain belt which crosses this State from Maryland to the boundary line of Tennessee and North Carolina, sparkles with rare gems of beauty: foaming waterfalls, steel-blue expanses of river surface, bold mountains, dashing brooks, and many of the curiosities of nature not to be found elsewhere. Of these are the Natural Bridge, its towering arch rising 55 feet higher than Niagara Falls; the Peaks of Otter, 5,307 feet above the level of the sea, over the tops of which John Randolph was fond of watching the sun rise; Marshall's Pillar, named in honor of Chief Justice Marshall, which rises more than 1,000 feet above the river's margin; the Natural Tunnel in Scott County, 70 feet in diameter, piercing the solid rock for a distance of 450 feet; Weyer's Cave, 1,600 feet in length, filled with innumerable apartments; mountain scenery which equals the finest portions of the Rhine; the Puncheon Run

Falls, where the water is hurled from the brow of a mountain into a basin two thousand feet below, and numerous rivers, like the James, the New, and the North, which cut through the rocks, and flow in the midst of some of the finest valley and mountain scenery in existence. It is among these scenes Mr. J. D. Woodward, a Virginia artist, has been sketching for *THE ALDINE*. Leaving the more widely known eastern portions of the State, he sought the real Arcadians of Virginia, who dwell beyond the mysterious barrier of the Blue Ridge Mountains, in the grand gallery lying between them and the Alleghanies—the garden valley of the State.

Leaving the town of Lynchburgh, following the James River in a north-westerly direction by the stage road, or slowly sailing by boat on the James River and Kanawha Canal, the traveler will, in the course of a few hours, behold the grandeur and beauty of Balcony Falls, where the James makes its passage through the Blue Ridge, dashing and murmuring between the rock-ribbed sides of the everlasting hills. A moonlight excursion in the summer along the canal is enchanting and picturesque. The Balcony Falls consist of a series of rapids, which commence near the mouth of the North River, and extend for seven or eight miles through a very wild country, seldom visited by artists, and almost unknown to the outside world. Our full-page illustration shows the characteristics of these falls and the surrounding mountain scenery. The people who dwell in this region are mostly engaged in agricultural pur-

suits, although the earth is rich in minerals, coal, cement, white sand, etc., while the iron obtained supplies the furnaces in the neighborhood of Lexington.

Following the usual route of tourists, from Lynchburgh to the Natural Bridge, the spot is reached on the Upper James which has been so beautifully depicted in one of our illustrations. This scene is near a place known as Rope Ferry, where the canal crosses the James River. An actual rope ferry is not now in use, the boats, as a general thing, being poled across the river. The canal divides immediately at the foot of the Blue Ridge, a section of it extending up the North River, while another follows the banks of the James, near to the mouth of Cedar Creek, which is within two miles of the Natural Bridge. All mountains, when seen in the distance, are blue, but the Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia, some of which are shown in the picture, possess a depth, a variety and a wealth of different shades of blue, that are strikingly peculiar, so much so that the color has given them their name. The late Edward A. Pollard, in his book called the "Virginia Tourist," says: "It is a blue of infinite richness, of a strange, misty depth that baffles analysis, and as variable as the sunset sky that joins with it. Now mist-gilded, again light as the heaven's arch, again purplish, again indescribable as a mixture of blue and red, and all these phenomena taking place, perhaps, in half-an-hour's span of the sun, the garments of the mountain change, swift as the weaver's shuttle that makes them in the light woven of earth and sky."

The Natural Bridge of Virginia is a well-known feature of American scenery, having been frequently sketched by artists, but, like the Falls of Niagara, it is such a stupendous work of nature, rising a hundred feet above the highest trees of the forest, a different aspect is presented from each point of view, and no two pictures of it are exactly alike. Relieved against the purple side of a distant mountain, it stands out as a perfect and clean-cut arch of whitish-gray limestone. Fifteen or twenty feet of soil grow on the top of this giant's portal, from which spring trees and shrubbery, forming a verdant crown. Indeed, so thickly is the stage road which crosses the bridge hedged with bushes, the traveler would not know when the arch had been reached if his attention were not called to the fact. The whole bridge is composed of one solid rock, the average width of

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POLAND. — C. METTAIS.